

PART VI

Livestock, Dairying and Poultry

General Importance

Dairying, livestock farming and poultry farming are important activities in Skamania County agriculture, although they are secondary to fruit production. Sales of livestock in the county were \$208,000 in 1954 which was one-fourth of the sales of all farm products. Dairy and livestock farming both had sales of \$77,000 while poultry sales totaled \$53,000. There were 25 farms specializing in poultry and egg production compared with 5 specialized dairy farms and 6 livestock farms in 1954.

The value of livestock approximated \$512,250 in 1954. Beef cattle and calves were the most valuable domestic animals raised, valued at \$252,000. Milk cattle valued at \$198,000 were the second ranking class. Hogs ranked third with a total value of \$22,480. During 1954, horses on Skamania County farms were valued at \$18,000 while all sheep were worth \$2,800. Value of livestock in Skamania County has more than doubled in value since 1949.

Total Value of Skamania County Livestock: \$512,250

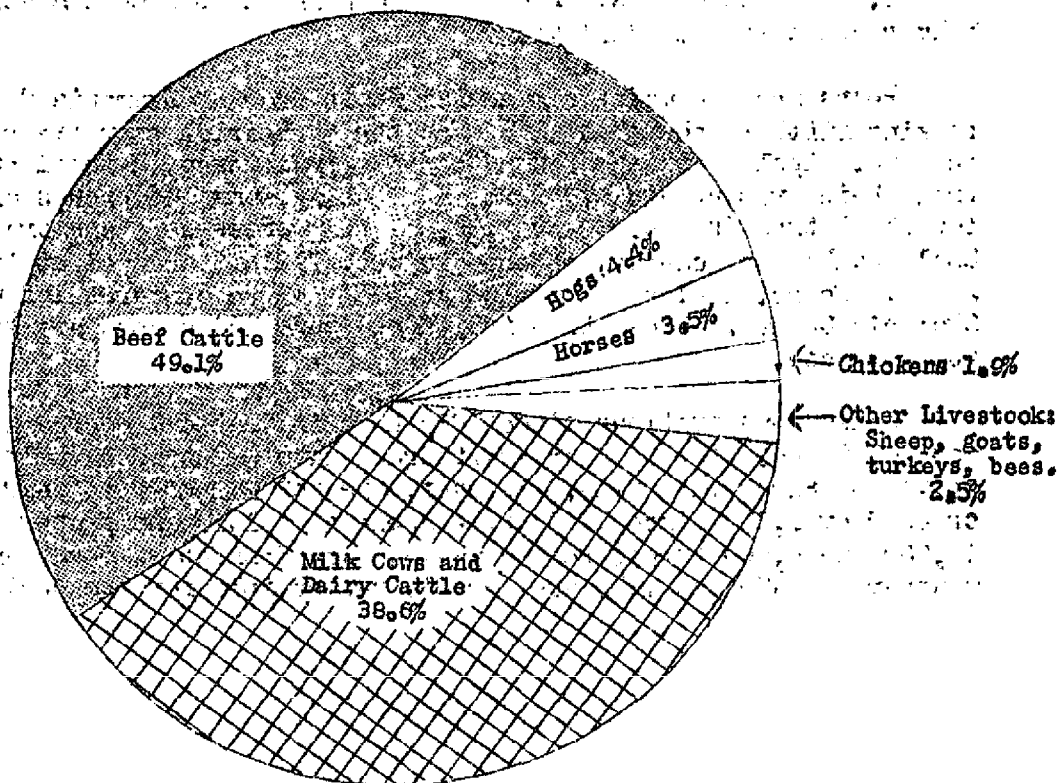


Figure 12.- Value of Livestock on Farms
Skamania County, 1954
(Based on U.S. Census, Agriculture)

Livestock Trends

Since about 1947 a sharp increase has occurred in beef cattle production in the county. At about the same time the number of dairy cattle began to decline. This shift in the cattle population of the county is currently the most important livestock trend in Skamania County. Since 1920 the number of horses and mules kept on farms in the county has declined to about one-fourth of the 1920 total. Hog numbers dropped after 1920 and remained fairly steady for many years but recently numbers have regained their 1920 level. Sheep numbers have remained fairly steady except for a brief period of expansion (2,700 head) in the last 1920's. The number of chickens kept on Skamania County farms has declined only slightly since 1939. Turkey production declined rapidly after 1939.

Cattle: Dairy and Beef Farming

Dairy and beef cattle combined totaled a new high of 2,200 head in 1955. They were kept on 180 farms or over 75 percent of all the farms in the county. Since 1955 beef cattle have outnumbered dairy cattle. Many farms keep both beef and dairy breeds while some have dual purpose cattle.

The trend to beef production and away from dairying is general throughout the state. Many part-time farmers have abandoned dairying and taken up beef which requires fewer hours of labor per day. Increased equipment, feeding and labor costs caused some farmers to give up dairying.

Table 20.- Cattle on Farms
Skamania County, 1939-1958

Year	All Cattle (head)	Beef Cattle (head)	Dairy Cattle (head)
1939	1,900	300	1,600
1940	1,900	300	1,600
1941	2,000	300	1,700
1942	1,900	300	1,600
1943	1,800	200	1,600
1944	1,700	100	1,600
1945	1,700	300	1,400
1946	1,700	200	1,500
1947	1,700	200	1,500
1948	1,700	200	1,500
1949	1,700	200	1,500
1950	1,800	200	1,600
1951	1,900	300	1,600
1952	2,000	400	1,600
1953	2,000	400	1,600
1954	2,100	700	1,400
1955	2,200	900	1,300
1956	2,000	800	1,200
1957	2,000	900	1,100
1958	2,000	900	1,100

Source: U.S.D.A., AMS, Agric. Estimates Divn.
State of Washington

During 1954 a total of 720 head of cattle and calves were sold from 94 Skamania County farms. The sale of cattle and calves returned a gross of \$61,600 to producers in that year. This represented an increase in the dollar value of sales since 1949. Between 1949 and 1954 the number of farms selling cattle and calves declined but the number sold increased.

Skamania County dairy farmers sold 1,616,000 pounds of whole milk and 20,400 pounds of cream in 1954 but production has declined since 1939. There were 600 milk cows in the county in 1954 compared with 1,000 in 1939. Whole milk production has held up at relatively high levels because production per cow has increased over 1939. Thirty farms sold whole milk in 1954 with total sales being valued at \$65,800. Another 26 farms sold cream valued at \$11,600 during that year. The Census of 1954 did not report commercial farm butter sales, but 54 farm households reported churning butter for their own use.

Table 21.- Dairy Products Sold From Farms
Skamania County, 1939-1954

Year	Whole Milk Sold From Farms		Cream Sold From Farms		Butter Sold From Farms	
	(pounds)	(dollars)	(pounds)	(dollars)	(pounds)	(dollars)
1939	1,907,497	41,390	35,568	8,892	305	85
1944	1,711,400	55,280	10,069	5,035	3,276	1,475
1949	1,358,306	59,251	19,201	12,322	1/	1/
1954	1,615,971	65,809	20,372	11,599	1/	1/

1/ No data enumerated.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture

Poultry Farming

Poultry farming is an important enterprise in Skamania County. In dollar value of products sold from farms, poultry raising is the fourth most important type of farming in the county. Sales of eggs, fryers, other meat chickens and other poultry returned about \$53,000 to Skamania County farmers in 1954.

Commercial egg production is the leading part of the poultry industry. About 85,800 dozen eggs were sold from 43 farms in 1954. Total egg sales were valued at \$36,800. The number of chickens on hand has declined from 11,300 birds in 1939 to 9,900 birds in 1954. The sale of meat chickens is the second most important part of the poultry enterprise. About 21,000 birds were sold from 30 farms in 1954 with a total value of \$16,100. One farm specialized in broilers with a production of 15,000 birds during 1954.

Turkey production has almost disappeared from Skamania County. During 1939 a total of 7,500 turkeys were kept on Skamania County farms. By 1944 only 250 birds were reported. After World War II there was a return of interest in turkey production with 1,100 reported in 1949. The Census of 1954 reported only 40 turkeys in the county.

Table 22.- Chickens, Egg Production, Turkeys
Skamania County, 1939-1954

Year	Chickens (birds)	Egg Production (dozens)	Turkeys Raised (birds)
1939	11,274	110,777	7,482
1944	10,896	88,259	244
1949	7,892	75,318 1/	1,132
1954	9,891	85,843 1/	37

1/ Eggs sold by farmers; does not include eggs consumed on farms.

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture

Hogs

Hogs are a minor livestock enterprise in Skamania County. The number has remained fairly stable with between 300 and 400 head in the county from 1920 until recent years. A substantial increase in hog numbers occurred in the early 1950's. Over 560 head were reported in 1954 compared with 240 in 1949 and the 1954 total was the most hogs reported in the county since 1920. During 1954 a total of 49 farms kept hogs. About 440 head were sold from 21 farms with the dollar value of sales being about \$13,300. Some farms keep one or two head for slaughter and farm household use. This practice has become less common in recent years than it was before 1940.

Horses and Mules

The use of horses and mules for farm work, logging and transportation has decreased greatly during the last 30 years as tractors, trucks and other machines have replaced the work animal. In 1920 there were almost 500 horses and mules in Skamania County. By 1954 only 120 head were enumerated by the Census. Most of the horse population is scattered 1 or 2 head per farm with few horses now being used for work power.

Table 23.- Hogs, Sheep, Horses and Mules
Skamania County, 1939-1954

Year	Hogs (head)	Sheep (head)	Horses and Mules (head)
1939	383	309	262
1944	393	250	240
1949	239	101	121
1954	562	192	120

Source: U.S. Census, Agriculture

Sheep

Following a general state-wide trend, sheep raising has been declining in Skamania County in recent years. Only 190 head were enumerated in 1954 compared with 310 head in 1939. The number of farms raising sheep increased from

12 to 13 during that period so there has been a definite trend toward farm flocks of smaller size. The average number of sheep kept per farm is about 11 head. Seven farms sold 120 sheep in 1954 for \$1,650.

Small Animal Industry

The raising of goats is a sideline on several farms in the county. During 1954 a total of 15 farms reported keeping 390 head of goats. This compares with 14 farms in 1949. Domestic rabbits were kept on 18 farms in 1949. Three farms specialized in fur farming. Seven farms sold goats, rabbits or furs in 1949 worth \$7,000. Each year several farms keep bees and produce honey. Thirteen farms kept 60 hives in 1949 producing 440 pounds of honey.